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SUBJECT: AFRICAN UNION'S NEW UN AMBASSADOR

¶1. (U) Mahamat Saleh Annadif, former Director of Cabinet for President Idriss Deby and a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, departs next week for New York to assume his post as the African Union's Ambassador to the United Nations. In recent conversations, Annadif described his responsibilities in terms of representing the AU and coordinating African positions in business before the Security Council. Annadif expressed interest in meeting with USUN representatives soon after his arrival in New York. He also hopes to visit Washington for discussions there.

¶2. (U) Comment and Action Requested: Annadif had been a good contact of Embassy N'djamena over the years. He has served an invaluable role as the go-to person in sorting out problems at the level of the Presidency. We expect he will be a professional, approachable diplomat in New York. We believe it will be well worth establishing contact with him as he makes the rounds in New York and Washington.

¶3. (SBU) BIO NOTE: Annadif was born December 25, 1956, in Arada in the desert north of Abeche in eastern Chad. He belongs to the ethnic group denoted "Arab" in Chad, because its native language is Arabic. He holds a master's degree in engineering from the University of Madagascar. After the accession of Idriss Deby to power in 1990 he became the director of Chad's International Telecommunications Company. He held the post of Foreign Minister from 1997-2004, an unusually long stint for Chad. He then served one and a half years as Deby's Chief of Staff, before being named AU Ambassador to the United Nations. As Foreign Minister, he broadened Chad's foreign-aid partners, establishing relations with the Islamic Development Bank and the Gulf states. He engineered Chad's recognition of Taiwan in 1999, which similarly resulted in a large dose of foreign aid programmed for road infrastructure, public water systems, large-scale irrigated rice farms, hospitals, and teachers' salaries. Chad's Foreign Minister (Annadif) was also cited during this time as being on a list of 270 persons awarded lucrative oil contracts by Iraq in the "oil for food" program.

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